ORNAMENTAL BRICKWORK.

Fig. 1.—LOTUBURY.

Fig. 2.—INNER TEMPLE.

possession of scientific materials, — brick, iron, &c.,

"The bones of the giant, Civilization,"

is like a fresh point of observation to the poet; they are additional fuel to the blaze which may, for a time, appear obscured to them, but will eventually seize on every side, and use them but as instruments for its own exaltation, and for diffusing a brighter glow to the surrounding world. The scientific material we are obliged to resort to, on account of our geological position, is brick. Instead of art being the gem to adorn it, it has been too long considered but a veil to obscure it.

To the unfortunate antagonism in which the art and science of architecture is placed, I attribute the cry of regret that we shall have no "national" edifice on the land we bequeath to posterity. Were our buildings durable, no one would, I think, misread the age when Gothic art was made lustrously intrusive, and the external outline of the Italian palaces were purified to adorn Pall Mall. Will the Houses of Parliament be no index to the future art-historian? The fact is, the majority of our buildings—our Compo ones—will scarcely outlast one generation; otherwise, we might

"make our life sublime;
And dying, leave behind us
Foot-prints on the sands of Time."

What, then, is the cause of this error?

Firstly,—I attribute it to that broad Upas tree —Fashion: to another phase of that vulgarism which has been well ridiculed under the head of "snobbishness." Do we not see the same disgusting propensity for finery and flippancy; the same dissatisfaction with the true position, and an envy of the grandeur unattainable; the like grasping at the *appearance*, instead of the *reality* of truth; and, worse than all, being satisfied with it? The tradesman is not contented unless his shop—or, pardon me, his first floor—be like a mansion at the West-end; and in happy ignorance he retires in the evening to

"fill a niche in
A Grecian temple opening to a kitchen."

Another preventive—and the most formidable to brick decoration—is "the duty." This is 5s. 10d. on ordinary bricks; double that sum if the size be but an inch exceeded (and, remember, this duty is levied before the bricks are burnt. This requires a larger profit, to cover the loss on the bricks damaged in burning); and a double duty is also charged on ornamental bricks. "Why," asks a writer in The Builder, "should the geological position of a place be taxed? A person living near a stone quarry pays no tax for his building material; why should he who chances to reside near a brickfield?"

Speaking of this subject, Dr. Ure says,—"The espionage of the excise is a bar to all invention, in every art under its control. The excise system is totally incompatible with their healthy growth. The sooner this portion of the revenue—so offensively, oppressively, and expensively collected—is replaced by an equitable tax on property, the better for the welfare of this great country. In concluding a very extensive survey of the great branches of our national industry, this vile obstacle to their progressive growth became so apparent, that it would have been pusillanimous to shrink from the task of pointing out the magnitude of the evil."

It is strange that the architectural societies move not in the matter. Their opinions would have great weight.

If the duty cannot be taken off all kinds of bricks, at least the barrier might be removed which obstructs the onward march of a section —and no inferior one—of decorative architecture, and prevents the transit of the old brick ornament into the present century. That this would result from its removal, we conclude from the fact that glass has become highly ornamental since it has been exempted from duty. Much may, however, yet be accomplished by an artist of taste and judgment, as is proved by examples which follow. One of the first modern attempts was made at the New Streatham Church, by Mr. Wyld. The decoration is procured at a comparatively trifling cost, and the position of every brick seems to have been determined after attentive consideration. The angular ornament so conspicuous there, is also seen in the fence walls of Lambeth Palace, and in the almshouses at the corner of the Kennington-road.

It will be perceived that all projections entail the necessity of having the interior of the wall occasionally formed of small pieces. This is, of course, to be regretted, but the brick duty almost compels it, by forbidding the use of larger sized bricks. To give as much consistency as possible to these parts, they should invariably be laid in cement. Another constructive defect is in the cornice, where tiles are laid on, instead of the parts being expressly moulded; but—"*the duty*."

The campanile of Streatham church is covered with bricks laid in a diamond-shaped pattern, relieved by bricks of a different colour, and the effect is good. The small three-light window in the western front will also repay attention. The whole church is evidence of what good effect may be produced with a small outlay, judiciously employed.

Another specimen I shall instance, in the ill-fated engine-house at the New-Cross station of the Croydon Railway.

The defect in Mr. Wyld's cornice is not seen here, and the joints of the brickwork composing it are very carefully broken. One course is laid on edge, apertures being left in it for the ventilation. The keys to the arches, ends of pediment, and other parts requiring additional strength, are stone. We may see here what good results spring from simply splaying the angles.

The whole of the decorations of this building, particularly the tall chimney before mentioned, are very effective, especially at a distance. As we approach, it seems rather too *red* for its position. Had it, for instance, instead of a dirty-looking town, some fine tall trees to relieve it, the effect would be at once much improved. This is a point that needs to be well studied, and the various hues of which bricks may be obtained afford the architect an opportunity of designing his building in perfect harmony with the adjoining scenery. The climate of our country is on the cool side of temperate, and requires, consequently, that a cheering tint should prevail in our buildings, and no material can give this better than bricks. The disagreeable effect of *white* compo is palpable.

I do not maintain that brickwork should be employed for every architectural purpose; but wherever it is used, it should be suitably decorated.

I will now consider two or three arguments to be urged against it.

It is common. Be it so;—the more conspicuous will the *art* become; for,

"Like bright metal on a sullen ground,
'Twill shew more brightly and attract more eyes,
Than that which hath no foil to set it off."

It has, however, a bad name. We have a right regal sneer against its employment. Augustus Cæsar is reported to have said, in his usual boasting style, that "he found Rome of brick, and left it of marble." Supposing he did so (which is not the fact, for marble was used there years before he trod the "by-paths and crooked ways" that led to his throne), it was on account of the morbid desire for *possession*, rather than *appreciation* and *production* of art, which reigned in his age, and which developed itself in the luxury and magnificence which surrounded Rome's first Emperor.

Notwithstanding this objection, I believe if

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